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Source: [Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results, 2015-16 financial year](#)

Australian households are spending more per week on living and learning according to new detailed spending data from the Household Expenditure Survey, released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

"In the six years since the last survey, the biggest increases in spending on goods and services by households have been in education (up by 44 per cent), household services and operation, including child care services (up by 30 per cent), energy and health care (both up by 26 per cent)," ABS Chief Economist, Bruce Hockman said.

"We're seeing increased spending for families with children in many areas. The hike in education spending mainly came from spending on school fees, which rose by almost half from 2009-10 to 2015-16. Child care spending also rose considerably, almost doubling over that six year period."

In 2015-16, child care spending was highest for couple families whose youngest child was under five years. These households spent an average of \$114 per week on child care. Child care spending decreased to an average of \$21 per week in households where the youngest child had reached school age (5-14 years), but average spending on school fees for these households was \$152 per week.

Where you live makes a big difference to household spending. Sydney households reported the highest average spending on child care in 2015-16, at \$30 per week, more than \$12 higher than the national average.

When it comes to energy, households in some cities were spending a lot more in 2015-16 to keep the lights on than in 2009-10. Perth and Adelaide saw the largest percentage increases in average electricity spending, at 37 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. Hobart and Canberra were the only capital cities where spending on electricity remained stable over the six years.

Darwin households spent the most in dollar terms on electricity, averaging \$47 per week in 2015-16, but Canberra spent the most on gas, at \$21 per week on average.

Average weekly spending on health care has increased by 26 per cent, from \$66 in 2009-10 to \$82 in 2015-16.

Households where the reference person was aged 55-64 years were paying more for health care in 2015-16. Average weekly spending by these households was up by \$24 over the six year period, from \$78 in 2009-10 to \$102 in 2015-16. Most of this increase was in health insurance payments, which rose on average from \$35 to \$51 per week over the same period.

Media notes

- Expenditure data are unadjusted for inflation over time.
- Estimates are for people who reside in private dwellings in Australia, excluding Very Remote areas.
- 'Household services and operation' includes spending on items such as cleaning products, gardening services and child care services.

Feedback

- 'Energy' includes domestic fuel and power costs such as gas and electricity.
- 'Health care' includes expenditure on health practitioner's fees, accident and health insurance, and medicines, pharmaceutical produces and therapeutic appliances.
- 'School fees' includes spending on tuition and sports fees to primary and secondary schools.
- 'Non-school fees' includes spending on fees from tertiary, vocational and other higher educational institutions.
- Expenditure data are from the 2015-16 Household Expenditure Survey.
- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source.
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Communications Section on 1300 175 070 (8.30am - 5:00pm Mon-Fri).
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